

Grades 3-5

1.) Grade 3 Multiple-Choice (Standard 2 – Reading Comprehension)

Read “Snow Hopper”. Then answer the question that follows.

Snow Hopper

Take a walk in the woods on a sunny winter’s day. You might find tiny insects, called snow fleas, hopping on snow.

Crowds of snow fleas travel together. They look like grains of pepper popping up and down. If you put your hand on the snow, some may hop on top. Lift your hand up and snow fleas jump off.

How do snow fleas hop? Each snow flea has two tiny tails. The tails bend under a snow flea’s body, and are held by little hooks. When the hooks open, the tails spring out and the snow flea leaps up. Snow fleas are also called springtails.

In the winter, snow fleas chew dead leaves and plants buried beneath the snow. When they can’t find enough food, they hop to someplace new.

A million snow fleas may move together. Some hop on top of the snow. Most crawl under leaves below the snow.

In a few days their journey is done. The tiny travelers may have moved 25 meters, about the length of a swimming pool. Then the huge group disappears. Where do all the snow fleas go? No one knows for certain, but their snow-hopping days are done.

Which of these sentences from the passage BEST tells the size of snow fleas?

- A. “Crowds of snow fleas travel together.”
- B. “They look like grains of pepper popping up and down.”
- C. “Snow fleas are also called springtails.”
- D. “When the hooks open, the tails spring out and the snow flea leaps up.”

Correct Answer: B. “They look like grains of pepper popping up and down.”

2.) Grade 3 Constructed-Response (Standard 3 – Literary Response & Analysis)

Read “Mei-Win’s Blue Beads”. Then answer the question that follows.

Mei-Win’s Blue Beads

Mei-Win did not want to go to school today.

“Everyone in my class will be friends already,” she told her mother. “They will not notice me. Besides, I don’t know how to make new friends.”

“Don’t worry, Mei-Win,” said her mother. “You will find a way to meet new friends.”

Then, her mother put a necklace around Mei-Win’s neck. The necklace was made of blue glass beads. It had once belonged to Mei-Win’s grandmother. Now it belonged to her mother.

“Thank you, Mother!” said Mei-Win. With the blue necklace close to her heart, she felt a little better.

Soon Mei-Win was in her new classroom. She looked around at all the new faces, and she felt alone. She did not speak to anyone. Even at lunch, Mei-Win sat alone.

After lunch, her teacher Mrs. Jackson asked Mei-Win a question. “Mei-Win, where did you live before you moved to our town?”

Mei-Win stood up to reply to Mrs. Jackson’s question. Before she could speak, her necklace of blue beads broke! All the beads fell down to the floor. They bounced and rolled across the classroom. One bead landed in a boy’s shoe. Another bead rolled under a girl’s desk.

“Oh!” said Mei-Win. She did not know what to do.

Then, a wonderful thing happened. The boy took the blue bead out of his shoe, and he brought it to Mei-Win. “Hi,” he said. “My name is Ricky.”

Next, a girl brought another bead to Mei-Win. “Hello,” she said. “I’m Lupita. Do you want to sit with me at lunch tomorrow?”

One by one, the children in the class brought blue beads to Mei-Win. Each one told Mei-Win his or her name and smiled. And before Mei-Win knew it, she had new friends.

ISTEP+ English/Language Arts Sample Items (Grades 3-5)
(Beginning in Spring 2009)

How do Mrs. Jackson and the other students in the class show kindness towards Mei-Win? Use details from the story to support your answer.

Scoring:

- 2-point Constructed-Response rubric

Example of a Top-Score Response:

Mrs. Jackson starts to talk to Mei-Win by asking her where she used to live. The boys and girls in the classroom help her collect the blue beads from Mei-Win's necklace when it broke apart. They also introduce themselves to Mei-Win, and one little girl even invites Mei-Win to eat lunch with her tomorrow.

ISTEP+ English/Language Arts Sample Items (Grades 3-5)
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3.) Grade 5 Multiple-Choice (Standard 1 – Word Recognition, Fluency, & Vocabulary Development)

Read this sentence.

Her expression was serene as she relaxed on the beach.

The word *serene* comes from the Latin word *serenus*, meaning “clear, cloudless, untroubled. ” What does *serene* MOST LIKELY mean as used in this sentence?

- A. amused
- B. warm
- C. dull
- D. peaceful

Correct Answer: D. peaceful

4.) Grade 4 Multiple-Choice (Standard 4 – Writing Process)

Choose the sentence that is MOST clearly written.

- A. My books I left on top of my desk.
- B. I left my books on top of my desk.
- C. I left on top of my desk my books.
- D. On top of my desk I left my books.

Correct Answer: B. I left my books on top of my desk.

5.) Grade 5 Multiple-Choice (Standard 5 – Writing Applications)

Read this sentence.

Sam said that he was ready to watch the movie.

Which word can be used to replace the underlined word to show that Sam was **eager** to watch the movie?

- A. mentioned
- B. exclaimed
- C. whispered
- D. remarked

Correct Answer: B. exclaimed

6.) Grade 4 Extended-Response (Standard 5 – Writing Applications)

Read the story below. Then complete the writing activity that follows.

July Fourth

Crack! Boom! Bang! A rush of bright light fills the sky. Children giggle, and parents “ooh” and “ahh” as the fireworks explode in the darkness. I stare and wait for the next beautiful round of sparks to paint the sky. Then with a crash that makes the ground shake, a new set of fireworks is sent flying into the darkness. I wait - - one, two, three seconds - - hoping for my favorite color. Purple! There it is! A giant purple flower draws shouts of delight from the crowd. I can feel the excitement in the air and smell the smoke from the explosions. Though it is late at night, I am wide-awake. This is my favorite holiday!

The author describes her July Fourth holiday. Write about a favorite holiday that you remember. Be sure to include details in your writing.

Scoring:

- 4-point Writing Applications rubric (grades 3-5)
- 4-point Language Conventions rubric (grades 3-5)

NOTE: Each extended-response item will be accompanied by a **blank** prewriting/planning space for students at all grade levels to use in preparation for their final drafts.

ISTEP+ English/Language Arts Sample Items (Grades 3-5)
(Beginning in Spring 2009)

7.) Grade 3 Multiple-Choice (Standard 5 – Writing Applications)

Read this letter. Then answer the question that follows.

June 28, 2008

Dear Matt,

My family plans to go camping at Blue Lake next week. My parents say that I may invite a friend to come along. Would you like to come camping with us? _____. We will come back late Sunday afternoon.

I hope that you can come. We would have so much fun together!

Your friend,

Dan

Which sentence would fit BEST on the blank line in this letter?

- A. Six people can sleep in our tent.
- B. We caught a lot of fish last summer.
- C. Dad collected wood for the campfire.
- D. We will leave early Saturday morning.

Correct Answer: D. We will leave early Saturday morning.

8.) Grade 5 Constructed-Response (Standard 3 – Literary Response & Analysis)

Read “The New Student”. Then answer the question that follows.

The New Student

Alvin was a new student who had come from a small town in a faraway state. Where Alvin lived before, the weather was cold most of the time. He moved to his new home in November, but it was not yet very cold in his new town. Nevertheless, Alvin wore his favorite outfit for his first day at his new school: wool slacks and a colorful sweater.

He looked in the classroom and saw a sea of unfamiliar faces. Reluctantly, he went in. Even being with his mom and the school principal did not help.

His new teacher brought him to the front of the classroom. She said something about where Alvin had come from and told the class his name. Thirty faces looked at Alvin. He felt too hot. He did not hear anything the teacher said, nor did he say anything himself. He looked at all the other students sitting at their desks. None of them was wearing a sweater. None of them looked like his old classmates had looked. The teacher showed Alvin to his desk.

Alvin didn't look at anyone. He stared at the reading book the teacher had given him. The book was not like his old book at all. He tried to listen, but Alvin couldn't find the page the class was reading.

Peter sat at the desk next to Alvin. Peter held up his reading book and pointed to the number at the bottom of the page. At the end of the lesson, Peter said to Alvin, “It doesn't get very cold here until January. Maybe then I will get a sweater like yours,” and he smiled. Alvin smiled too, and gave Peter one of his new erasers, one that looked like a boat.

ISTEP+ English/Language Arts Sample Items (Grades 3-5)
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Describe how Peter shows that he will be a friend to Alvin. Use details from the story to support your answer.

Scoring:

- 2-point Constructed-Response rubric

Example of a Top-Score Response:

Peter sits next to Alvin in class and helps him find the right page in his reading book. Peter smiles at Alvin and accepts the eraser that Alvin gives to him. Peter told Alvin that he might get a sweater like his when the weather gets cold.

9.) Grade 5 Extended-Response (Standard 5 – Writing Comprehension)

Read “My Favorite Snow”. Then complete the writing activity that follows.

My Favorite Snow

My favorite snow is the happy snow
that flutters down
in friendly flakes
smiling from peaceful piles
then invites me
into powdery games
laughing all the while
and becomes a man
of snowball shapes
wearing a frosty smile.

By Mark Merfeld

Since he wrote about liking snow so much, winter is probably the poet’s favorite season.

What is your favorite season? Describe which one of the four seasons you like best (winter, spring, summer, or fall) and why it is your favorite season. Be sure to include details in your writing.

Scoring:

- 4-point Writing Applications rubric (grades 3-5)
- 4-point Language Conventions rubric (grades 3-5)

NOTE: Each extended-response item will be accompanied by a **blank** prewriting/planning space for students at all grade levels to use in preparation for their final drafts.

ISTEP+ English/Language Arts Sample Items (Grades 3-5)
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10.) Grade 3 Writing Prompt (Standard 5 – Writing Applications)

Read the information in the box. Then complete the writing activity.

Teacher for the Day

Pretend that you are the teacher of your class for one day. You may run your class your own way. What would you teach? What kinds of things would happen? Why would your students like you?

Write a story that tells what happens on this day. In your story, tell what you teach in your classroom, what happens, and why your students like you.

Prewriting Activity

- Here are some questions to help you think about your story:
 - What do you teach in your classroom?
 - What kinds of things happen throughout the day?
 - Why do your students like you?
- Be sure to include:
 - a beginning, a middle, and an end
 - details in your story to make it interesting

Scoring:

- 6-point Writing Applications rubric (grades 3-5)
- 4-point Language Conventions rubric (grades 3-5)

NOTE: Each writing prompt will be accompanied by a **blank** prewriting/planning space for students at all grade levels to use in preparation for their final drafts.